

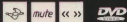
NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS

the boatman's call

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The Boatman's Call

CDSEEDS10/5099909572928



CD

- 1 INTO MY ARMS 2 LIME TREE ARBOUR
3 PEOPLE AIN'T NO GOOD 4 BROMPTON ORATORY
5 THERE IS A KINGDOM
6 (ARE YOU) THE ONE THAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?
7 WHERE DO WE GO NOW BUT NOWHERE?
8 WEST COUNTRY GIRL 9 BLACK HAIR 10 IDIOT PRAYER
11 FAR FROM ME 12 GREEN EYES

DVD

AUDIO

THE BOATMAN'S CALL IN 5.1 AND STEREO
LITTLE EMPTY BOAT
RIGHT NOW I'M A-ROAMING
BLACK HAIR (BAND VERSION)
COME INTO MY SLEEP
BABE, I GOT YOU BAD

VIDEO

DO YOU LOVE ME LIKE I LOVE YOU (PART 10: THE BOATMAN'S CALL)
INTO MY ARMS
(ARE YOU) THE ONE THAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?

SUBTITLES: ENGLISH, FRENCH, GERMAN, ITALIAN, SPANISH

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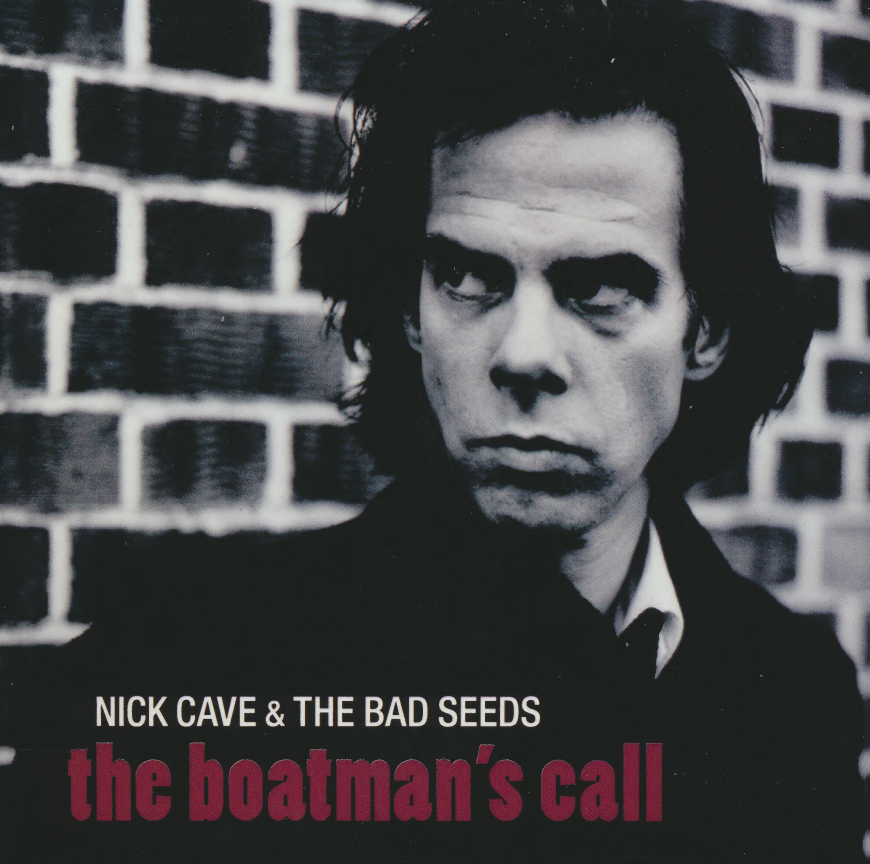
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BLACK HAIR

Last night my kisses
Were banked in black hair
And in my bed, my lover,
Her hair was midnight black
And all her mystery dwelled
Within her black hair
And her black hair framed
A happy heart-shaped face
And heavy-hooded eyes
Inside her black hair
Shined at me from the depths
Of her hair of deepest black
While my fingers pushed into
Her straight black hair
Pulling her black hair back
From her happy heart-shaped face
To kiss her milk-white throat,
A dark curtain of black hair
Smothered me, my lover
With her beautiful black hair
The smell of it is heavy
It is charged with life
On my fingers lingers the smell
Of her deep black hair
Full of all my whispered words,
Her black hair
And wet with tears and goodbyes,
Her hair of deepest black
All my tears cried against
Her milk-white throat
Hidden behind the curtain
Of her beautiful black hair
As deep as ink and black,
Black as the deepest sea
The smell of her black hair
Upon my pillow
Where her head and all its
Black hair did rest
Today she took a train to the West
Today she took a train to the West
Today she took a train to the West

IDIOT PRAYER

As they're taking me down, my friend
And as they usher me off to my end
Will I bid you adieu?
Or will I be seeing you soon?
If what they say around here is true
Then we'll meet again
Me and you

My time is at hand, my dove
They're gonna pass me to that house above
Is Heaven just for victims, dear?
Where only those in pain go?
Well it takes two to tango
We will meet again, my love
I know

If you're in Heaven then you'll forgive me, dear
Because that's what they do up there
But if you're in Hell, then what can I say
You probably deserved it anyway
I guess I'm gonna find out one day
For we will meet again
And there'll be Hell to pay

Your face comes to me from the depths, dear
Your silent mouth mouths, 'Yes', dear
Dark red and big with blood
They're gonna shut me down, my love
They're gonna launch me into the stars
Well, all things come to pass
Yeah, Glory Hallelujah

This prayer is for you, my love
Sent on the wings of a dove
An idiot prayer of empty words
Love, dear, is strictly for the birds
We each get what we deserve
My little snow white dove
Rest assured

FAR FROM ME

For you, dear, I was born
For you I was raised up
For you I've lived and for you I will die
For you I am dying now
You were my mad little lover
In a world where everybody fucks everybody else over
You who are so
Far from me
So far from me
Way across some cold neurotic sea
Far from me

I would talk to you of all manner of things
With a smile you would reply
Then the sun would leave your pretty face
And you'd retreat from the front of your eyes
I keep hearing that you're doing your best
I hope your heart beats happy
In your infant breast
You are so far from me
Far from me
Far from me

There is no knowledge but I know it
There's nothing to learn from that vacant voice
That sails to me across the line
From the ridiculous to the sublime
It's good to hear you're doing so well
But really can't you find somebody else that you can ring and tell?
Did you ever care for me?
Were you ever there for me? So far from me

You told me you'd stick by me
Through the thick and through the thin
Those were your very words
My fair-weather friend
You were my brave-hearted lover
At the first taste of trouble went running back to mother
So far from me
Far from me
Suspended in your bleak and fishless sea
Far from me
Far from me

GREEN EYES

Kiss me again, re-kiss me and kiss me
Slip your frigid hands beneath my shirt
This useless old fucker with his twinkling cunt
Doesn't care if he gets hurt

Green eyes, green eyes
Green eyes, green eyes

If it were but a matter of faith
If it were measured in petitions and prayer
She would materialise, all fleshed out
But it is not, nor do I care

Green eyes, green eyes
Green eyes, green eyes

So hold me and hold me, don't tell me your name
This morning will be wiser than this evening is
Then leave me to my enemies' dreams
And be quiet as you are leaving, Miss

Green eyes, green eyes
Green eyes, green eyes

The Boatman's Call
by Amy Hanson

"I wrote Brompton Oratory on an old Casio keyboard. I played it to my friend, Mick Geyer. I really enjoyed it. Mick, I'm afraid, had his doubts. But I just liked it, the crappy little drum machine and the whole thing played on that broken-down keyboard. It created a pleasing counterpoint to the gothic majesty of the lyric."

Nick Cave, December 2009

Murder Ballads was a diabolical behemoth, awash with death and destruction on the grandest scale imaginable. That was its truth. There were no rocks to look under, no dark corners to illuminate, and no layers of flesh to peel back. But as that album came together, Nick Cave was wrangling a different beast altogether - writing songs that were, in many ways, the antithesis of everything that had come before. Sparse, haunting, beautiful and confessional, the scratchings that began life in the shadows of the Murder Ballads would burst forth, delicate and trembling, on 1997's *The Boatman's Call*.

"We were making the Murder Ballads record," Cave recalls, "but at the same time I was writing a series of songs that were wholly different. As we were mixing that album I went into an adjoining studio with Marty [Casey] and Tommy [Wylder] and a piano and laid down a group of songs that were quiet and introspective."

From ideas to more fully framed pieces, those compositions gestated during 1995, and by the end of the year the band were together in London. Some of what transpired during these early sessions would stick, and in July 1996 the band decamped to London's legendary Abbey Road Studios to record. It was clear, very early on, that this would be a markedly different Bad Seeds album.

The Abbey Road studios were, according to guitarist Blixa Bargeld, "loaded with history. I liked the room. The room is the most important feature of a recording studio but for the way we were working - and especially for me - it wasn't ideal."

The album was to be recorded simply and straight - often the first take was the final take and it would be minimal. This was difficult at times for Bargeld, but to solve that problem he says, "I built myself a little shack within the giant room and I had a separate mixing desk for myself downstairs, so that I could play whatever came to me at any given moment without necessarily being on the backing track. For me, there is a lot of trial and error. I try different things, then slowly spiral in on a particular idea. I had access to all the other channels so I could manipulate everybody else's sound while they were playing without them hearing it. I was able to play and they wouldn't hear me."

It was a uniquely different experience. It was interesting, violinist Warren Ellis says, to see the musicians come together within the framework set out for the sessions. "The songs were rhythmically driven in a very different way." Drummer Thomas Wylder remembers, "having to slow way down. In the end it was simple and easy, but I have never played so slow!"

Ellis picks up on that. "The way Tommy played was extraordinary. He's a very gentle percussion player and put an amazing dynamic in; he's not obliterating the kit. It really allowed for him to bring a very deft expression into the material as well."

Mick Harvey explains that to make this album was "to approach the music in a different way; especially coming out of the Murder Ballads because that was a free for all where the band expected to play and come up with ideas throughout the sessions. Here, the music was restricted and what was played needed to be absolutely essential. The band demonstrated how much empathy they had with Nick and what he was trying to do, rather than just forcing their own hand."

Percussionist Jim Scavunos adds, "I guess the most challenging part of it was to be patient. Musicians are naturally eager to play and so it is difficult to restrain yourself sometimes from the enthusiasm of playing. But, it was really great to be forced to not be taking action all the time and to really listen - intensively and microscopically - and that's what we were doing. We examined the takes very carefully and there was a lot of focus on nuance. I'm very proud of that album."

He continues, "It is a very special moment of the band's existence, and Nick's existence as a songwriter. It's another strategy for defying expectation and it was those kinds of songs that were coming out of him. More importantly, he was feeling very introspective and it's hard to convey introspection with a cavalcade of people banging things and strumming away in the background. It doesn't feel very intimate, so you have to strip it down."

Ellis concurs, "It's a real pure sound. The instruments have a very pure sound and the vocal is very pure. The vocal is very unaffected, unforced. It has a beautiful tone. It's a tone, I think, that Nick had always had and something that has really followed him through since then."

Cave had a very clear vision of what he wanted to accomplish. "It was the first album I made that was obviously self-referential. The songs dramatized a certain aspect of my life and though it worked well on *Boatman's Call*, it's something that I was reluctant to do again. There's great value in those sorts of songs but there is also something about elevating your own ordinary situation into something heroic that, in the end, I was uncomfortable with."

With such personal songs to hand, there was now a necessity to shift the music. Although there were grumblings at times about what that would entail for the Bad Seeds, Cave was adamant. "Keep it simple. Keep it spare. Don't play," were Cave's instructions.

So what exactly were these songs? What exactly was this album? From the moment it hit the street, *The Boatman's Call* was awash in voyeuristic speculation. People, it seemed, couldn't get enough of trying to figure out who these songs were about, or who they were for. Ultimately, however, the answers to those questions aren't all that important for anyone but the writer himself. This album can be called a collection of letters addressed to very specific people. They are personal - to Cave - and for the most part remain so. But widen the scope a little and the lyrics are pertinent to the everyday, evoking reaction and emotions that are universal. Most importantly, though, *The Boatman's Call* is the sound of Cave enjoying his finest hour; open, empty, rich and naked - a volume of poetry set to music.

"*Into My Arms*" opens the album with song as prayer - written, Cave explains, "on an old piano in a dry-out clinic. I'm often writing about what I need rather than what I have. It's always been that way. Writing becomes a kind of ballast - a stabilizing force in my life."

Cave admits he was deeply embroiled in the New Testament at the time these songs were written and the themes of redemption, intervention and Biblical iconography pepper the set. "There are more overtly Christian concerns on this album. At that time I was genuinely seduced by much of what I had been reading in the New Testament - which I approached initially as a literary text, you understand. At that time the words of Christ had a huge impact over me."

"There Is A Kingdom," "Far From Me" and "Brompton Oratory" all go far in playing open wide Cave's own cathartic connection with a God, his God, any God at all. Of the three songs, though, it's the latter that best details how the sessions were taking a different tack. The instrumentation is sparse, as Wylder wields maracas and Bargeld says that his "guitar combined with the rhythm machine and created a great sounding thing."

And as much as Cave was influenced by what he was reading, for the first time in his lyrics came the overt, heartrending and poignant glimpses of what was going on in his personal life as well.

But even if you do take away any personal connection, any connotation of who and where, still we are left to revel in material that transcends the simple art of song, where lyrics and music become fragile and strong in the same breath, where the space between words says almost as much as the words themselves say.

And even though many would choose to paint this album with a gloomy brush, there are prodigious moments of love and contentment; indeed those are some of the central and driving forces throughout *The Boatman's Call*, tempering the gravely discomfort of songs like "Where Do We Go Now But Nowhere?" and "Idiot Prayer" with their own intimacy that love and contentment come with a price.

There is a sense of profound fragility in the human experience that underpins the songs. From the wistful and sometimes caustic melancholy of "People Ain't No Good," the late addition "Far From Me" and on to the absolutely haunting closer, "Green Eyes," the album unreels moments that are universal touchstones for anyone who has walked a mile in their own shoes.

Although Cave's delicate piano accompaniment dominates much of the set, there is an interesting sidestep on "Green Eyes," which spotlights a seemingly odd instrument. Scavunos calls it his melodic moment. "I found one at the Portobello flea market and picked it up and thought 'oh - that's kind of goofy looking, I wonder if that'll be any good.' I bashfully brandished in front of Nick and gave it a little toot and when they were done laughing they let me go in there and have a go with it. I was convinced that they were taking the piss and it ended up on the record."

"Lime Tree Arbour," meanwhile, is a deft collection of strong images that speak to the safety of a lover. Of this song Cave says, "It has a beautiful bass line." Harvey, who played it, agrees.

NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS
the boatman's call

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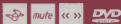


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DVD



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